

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

deliberations on the banning of chemical weapons, we hope that the international organizations will not wait for the same experience to move towards nuclear disarmament.

It is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the initiative of the Chairman of the CW Committee in holding informal open-ended consultations yesterday on the key subject of challenge inspection.

We all recognize the importance of reaching agreement on a challenge inspection regime for inclusion in the convention. Thus a number of proposals and ideas have been put forward by delegations. I believe we are building a solution through a process of careful consideration and discussion of the various component parts which have been suggested. We encourage Ambassador Eskin to continue the initiative which he has taken on this subject.

Important work has also been undertaken during the current session on, inter alia, the important questions of the composition, powers, functions and decision-making of the Consultative Committee and the Executive Council.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

Several statements have been made in the plenary recently about the current state of the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention. Concern has been expressed that the negotiations are marking time, that there has been a change in atmosphere.

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Australia, like other members of this Conference, deeply deplores the fact that chemical weapons continue to be used. The conclusions of the United Nations team of experts that chemical weapons have once again been used recently in the Gulf war is a matter of the deepest concern to us.

Simply, the use of chemical weapons must cease. We also share the view that has been expressed by other delegations that all members of this Conference should indicate whether or not they possess chemical weapons and chemical weapon production facilities. Several countries, including Australia, have indicated that they do not possess such weapons or facilities, but many member States have remained silent. They should break that silence. It would contribute to the strength of the convention to which we are all committed if each member of this Conference were to frankly state its position. Otherwise, confidence in the convention will be seriously undermined.